Research Essay Assignment (Final version due at Final Exam)

English 1100-A79

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Means for achieving strategic victory, in the War on Terror;

An Analysis of logistical and strategic shortcomings:

Intro:

In Chapter 15 of *"Handbook of Intelligence and Guerilla Warfare,* Alexander Orlov notes that "There are two types of Guerilla Wars… wars of national liberation waged by bands of the civilian population against a foreign invader… and an armed struggle waged by an outraged segment of the people against the injustices of the internal regime." (Orlov, Pg 164). In the context of the American Empire, and her "War on Terror", for nearly two decades, the majority of fronts have adhered to the former of Orlov's definitions. The majority of insurgents the United States wishes to suppress fall under the model of 'warriors of national liberation'. In formulating a strategy to combat such forces, one must be cognisant of the broader history of contemporary guerilla warfare strategy, terrorist tactics, and counter-strategies which have been attempted—with varying degrees of success—by colonial governments of the past.

Thesis:

This document posits that the "War on Terror" can indeed be "won" by the United States and her allies, if victory conditions that require a sustained commitment to maintenance of peace are acceptable, but that key parties involved lack the political will to accept the sacrifices necessary to achieve that goal, as those in power may not perceive the cost of such a "victory" to be justified. Furthermore, it seeks to examine the strategies employed by insurgents, and the responses employed by governments, as well as the outcomes thereof, in order to identify methods for successfully eradicating an insurgency. US policy shall be compared against those of world powers past and present, in order to ascertain viable proposals for achieving an equitable end to the present "War on Terror".

Part 1: "The American Culture of War", its shortcomings, and possible solutions:

In his essay *"The American Culture of War"*, Dr. Adrian R. Lewis of the University of North Texas notes that the United States Army is suffering from a "culture of war" which:

> "1) overemphasizes the value of advanced technologies, viewing them as a substitute to boots on the ground,
>
> 2) places faith in untested political and military strategies, rather than placing faith in known methods of operations with predictably high chances of success at the expense of unpalatable losses,
>
> 4) prevents the nation's wars from being "national wars" which forge unity, by eliminating the draft, and depending on unreliable mercenary contractors or colonial forces, and
>
> 5) seeks to maintain America's complacent position as a global superpower, without

> providing sufficient training to the general populace or the troops drawn therefrom, on the cultures and languages of the tributary peoples they wish to lead" (Lewis).

His first and second claims are supported by evidence that an over-reliance on American air power in the Vietnam War via an untested strategic policy known as "Graduated Response"—coupled with fears of a Sino incursion ala Korea—lulled the American high command into believing that a bloodless victory could be possible through carpet bombing and chemical weapons (ibid). Graduated Response focused on offensive aerial bombardment without coordinated offensive movement by sufficient numbers of infantry, and/or armoured forces; it wrongly assumed that air power alone could win them the war (ibid). Failure of "Shock and Awe"—a policy reminiscent of "Graduated Response"—to prevent the emergence of insurgency in Iraq serves to underline Dr. Lewis's point (ibid). From this, he concludes that one potential solution to successfully pacifying, occupying, and stabilizing regions of strategic importance along lines palatable to the United States is to increase the numbers of occupation troops available for key regions, to perform military policing, guard key installations, and conduct counter-insurgency missions (ibid).

The current dilemma in regards to America's lacking troop numbers mirrors that of the British Empire, which was plagued for many years by similar shortages throughout the 1700's and 1800's, leading to an inability to pacify revolts in valuable territories, including the original 13 Colonies in the Americas from which the United States was birthed (Colley 178). The British succeeded in offsetting this problem for a time, by employing colonial troops hailing primarily from India, but questions of dueling loyalties hampered their usefulness to a notable extent (Colley 185). In the wake of two World Wars', the expenditure of preserving the empire grew

too great to justify; this destabilization of a once great power spread to such an extent, that Guerilla Warfare and sectarian conflict spread to the British Isles itself in the form of "The Troubles", which were ultimately not resolved until the signing of the "Good Friday" ceasefire agreement in 1998 (Dorney). Like the British before them, in many regions—especially the Middle East—the Americans find themselves over-reliant on colonial troops of often questionable loyalty, to shore up frequently unpopular puppet governments against insurgency. It follows therefore, that the US Military must firstly, either reduce the number of active missions it is performing, or adhere to Dr. Lewis's recommendation to increase the number and quality of available ground troops.

Part 2: "The Troubles", IRA Strategy, and British Countermeasures; Lessons for the US in "The War on Terror":

What is colloquially referred to as "The Troubles" in Northern Ireland, and its outcome serves as a case study for counter-terrorism experts of one means for successfully bringing an end to a Guerilla War. "The Troubles" was a sectarian conflict in Northern Ireland, a province of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Ireland had been a part of the United Kingdom since 1801, but Southern Ireland successfully waged a war of succession in 1920/21; Britain retained control over the northern half of the island nation, resulting in tensions ever since (Dorney). Following the collapse of the wider British Empire, discontented members of the local populace of the British Isles formed an ethno-nationalist independence organization with Marxist economic leanings, known as the 'provisional Irish Resistance Army', or IRA, to conduct Guerilla operations against UK occupation forces, with the goal of driving the British out of Northern Ireland (Provos IRA).

According to page 8 of the IRA Green Book, the organization's modes of strategic operations for conducting Guerilla Warfare were as follows:

> "1. To wage a War of attrition against enemy personnel, which is aimed at causing as many casualties and deaths as possible, so as to create a demand from their people at home for their withdrawal.
>
> 2. To conduct a bombing campaign aimed at making the enemy's financial interest in our country unprofitable, while at the same time curbing long-term financial investment in our country.
>
> 3. To make the Six Counties as at present and for the past several years ungovernable except by colonial military rule.
>
> 4. To sustain the war and gain support for its end by National and International propaganda and publicity campaigns.
>
> 5. To defend the war of liberation by punishing criminals, collaborators, and informers." (ibid).

The provisional IRA, or "Provos's" campaign of terror was largely successful in many aspects; though many IRA members were arrested for treason or under specialized anti-terrorism legislation, tried, and subsequently incarcerated or executed over the course of the conflict, an organization estimated to have fewer than 400 active members at any one time (Boyne), was able to hold its own against the armed forces of what had been the largest empire on earth mere decades earlier. But for the absence of suicide bombers, and a relative desire to curb civilian casualties where possible, the IRA's modus operandi against the British was remarkably similar

to that of many groups the Americans face today. However, much like ISIS or its Al Qaeda affiliate, the IRA's use of bombings against military and economic targets often inflicted collateral damage, which harmed their reputation visa-vi the local population.

Ultimately, the IRA could not stir a sufficient proportion of the population to action; they consented to a ceasefire in 1998, accepting peace under the terms of the "Good Friday" agreement, which granted the right of Northern Ireland to be transferred by referendum to Irish control, should the majority there wish it, guaranteed the rights of citizens of Britain or Ireland with permanent residency in Northern Ireland to obtain dual citizenship between the two nations, and offered amnesty to some IRA members in exchange for disarming (Dorney). Acceptance of the "Good Friday" agreement undermined the legitimacy of the IRA, and granted Britain the ability to covertly import loyalists to Northern Ireland and provide them with dual citizenship, in order to underwrite the outcome of any referendum, subsequently influencing the politics of Ireland itself (ibid). The successful negotiated peace reached with the IRA is mirrored on a strategic level by more recent initiatives for brokering peace with FARC Narco-Terrorist Marxist Guerilla Fighters in Columbia (McDermott). Therefore, it follows that similar policies may work for disarming and re-integrating former members of terrorist groups the US is facing. Moreover, fighters could be offered a pardon in exchange for information, which might aid in capture of their comrades. To conclude, there are numerous means of resolving the strategic challenges of counter-insurgency operations in the twenty first century. The proposals contained herein are but a select subset of the options available at the policy level for governments to consider. The only matter in doubt, ultimately, is if they bear the political will to do that which must be done.

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